

Message Text

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15

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-11 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 AID-05 CU-02 /094 W

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R 151611Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5295

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY RABAT

USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L NOUAKCHOTT 0619

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PBOR PDIP MR AG SS

SUBJECT: SAHARA WATCH: AFTERMATH OF MAURITANIAN BREAK WITH
ALGERIA

REF: NOUAKCHOTT 584

SUMMARY: IT IS NOT CLEAR WHETHER THERE WILL BE ANY CONSULAR
OR PRACTICAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MAURITANIA AND ALGERIA
FOLLOWING RECENT BREAK IN DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. ALGERIAN
DIPLOMAT TELLS US CURRENT MAURITANIAN-ALGERIAN RELATIONSHIP
IS CONFUSED BUT NOT YET TOTALLY SEVERED. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO ALGERIAN DIPLOMAT IN NOUAKCHOTT, ALGERIANS
CALLED IN GIRM DIPLOMATS IN ALGIERS JUST AFTER MAURITANIA
BROKE DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA. ALGERIANS SAID
THEY UNDERSTOOD WHAT GIRM IS DOING ON DIPLOMATIC LEVEL BUT
ADDED IT IS NOT CLEAR WHAT MAURITANIA EXPECTS TO HAPPEN TO
"PRACTICAL" RELATIONS. SPECIFICALLY CITING MAURITANIAN
STUDENTS IN ALGIERS AND ALGERIAN TECHNICIANS IN
MAURITANIA, ALGERIANS ASKED IF THESE PROGRAMS ARE
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TO BE CONTINUED. ALGERIANS ARE REPORTEDLY STILL

WAITING FOR REPLY.

2. ALGERIAN DIPLOMAT CLAIMS GIRM SENT TICKETS THIS PAST WEEK TO ALL MAURITANIAN STUDENTS IN ALGIERS. TICKETS APPARENTLY ALLOW FOR TRAVEL TO THIRD COUNTRIES IN ADDITION TO RETURN TO NOUAKCHOTT. ALGERIAN SPECULATED MANY STUDENTS WILL EITHER REMAIN IN ALGIERS OR GO TO LOCATIONS SUCH AS PARIS. HE THOUGHT THERE IS ALSO POSSIBILITY GOA WILL ENCOURAGE SOME OF STUDENT TO REMAIN IN ALGIERS AND PUBLICLY SUPPORT POLISARIO.

3. ALL ALGERIAN TECHNICIANS WILL BE WITHDRAWN UNLESS GIRM GIVES ASSURANCES BY MIDDLE OF WEEK OF MARCH 15 THAT THEY WILL BE PROTECTED. (ALGERIAN NOTED THAT THESE TECHNICIANS COST GIRM NOTHING. ALL EXPENSES ARE PAID BY ALGERIAN GOVERNMENT.)

4. ALGERIANS ARE STILL WAITING FOR WORD FROM GOA ON QUESTION OF CONSULAR RELATIONS. ALGERIANS ARE WILLING TO MAINTAIN SKELETAL STAFF FOR CONSULAR AFFAIRS. AGAIN, IF NO WORD IS RECEIVED BY MIDWEEK, ALGERIANS WILL LOCATE ALL CONSULAR FUNCTIONS FOR MAURITANIA AT ITS EMBASSY IN DAKAR. ALGERIANS ARE CURRENTLY THINKING OF DESIGNATING LIBYA OR PAKISTAN AS COUNTRY RESPONSIBLE FOR ALGERIAN RELATIONS IN MAURITANIA.

5. ALL OFFICIAL ALGERIANS PLAN TO DEPART NOUAKCHOTT BY MIDDLE OF WEEK. MOST DO NOT EXPECT TO BE REASSIGNED TO ALGIERS, BUT RATHER FARMED OUT TO DAKAR AND OTHER OVERSEAS POSTS. THEY WILL NOT DEPART EN MASSE, BUT LEAVE INDIVIDUALLY STOPPING FIRST IN DAKAR.

6. ALGERIAN CONCLUDED THAT MAURITANIANS WILL NOT BE TREATED IN SAME FAVORED WAY IN ALGERIA FOR NEXT TWENTY YEARS. ALGERIAN DIPLOMAT, WHO WAS PREVIOUSLY STATIONED IN FOREIGN MINISTRY, NOTED THAT GOA PRACTICALLY DID HANDSPRINGS TO ASSIST MAURITANIAN EMBASSY PERSONNEL IN ALGIERS
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WITH HOST OF ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS. HE SAID ALGERIANS WILL NOT SOON FORGET DIPLOMATICALLY BREAK AND WHEN RELATIONS ARE REESTABLISHED AGAIN, EVEN IF DONE IN NEAR FUTURE, MAURITANIANS CAN EXPECT JUST AS ROUGH A TIME IN ALGIERS AS ALGERIAN OFFICIALS HAVE IN MAURITANIA. HANDYSIDE

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